1:Ingrams G-5 (1934-35)1936 MM2 Hadhramaut MM2

2. The Deluge and the Giants.

I proceed now to the narrative of Hadhramaut history as it is told and believed in the country. Unless otherwise stated, the narrative is as given verbally by local authorities and taken down in writing at the time. The principal authority for the period from the disappearance of the 'Adites to modern times is Seiyid 'Abdul Qadir, private secretary to the Qu'aiti *Wazir*.

"In the time of our Father Nuh," said a Du'an historian, "the whole of this land and of every land was covered with water.[1] Nuh and his family built a big ship and lived in it while the flood lasted. When the waters subsided there were of course large rivers, and that is how the Wadis of the Hadhramaut were cut out, and that is why you find sea shells in them and on the Jōl."

"After the flood came the children of 'Ad, the first men to live in the Hadhramaut. They were great in stature, fifty cubits high. That was why they could use these great stones for building their houses. The tooth you have in your hand is the tooth of one of the sons of 'Ad, not of a sheep, as you thought." Thus said Muhammad the son of Seiyid Ahmed bin Hussein al 'Attas, the *Mansab* of Meshhed, as we stood among the ruins of Gheibun.

The children of 'Ad built towns and villages all over the Hadhramaut.[2] Some of them were big places and well built, and some of them were just rude dry stone shelters such as the Beduins build [redacted].[3]

Nebi Allah Salih, peace be upon him, was a prophet of the people of 'Ad,[4] and he died and was buried in the Wadi Khonab, and his son was Nebi Allah Hud, peace be upon him. And in his day the people of 'Ad did evil in the sight of Allah and they listened not to the warnings of the Prophet, and they were destroyed, except a few, and Allah received the Prophet and his grave is in the Wadi Maseila.

And the son of Nebi Allah Hud was Nebi Hudūn, and his grave is in the mosque of Hudūn in the Wadi Du'an. And there were other Nebis in the Hadhramaut, Mola Matar (whom some say is Seiyidna 'Ali bin 'Abitalib), and Molana Nebi Sodaf whose grave is in the Wadi Sodaf, and others.[5]

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[1] Hadhramaut "history" begins with the Flood. The very nature of the Wadis makes it appear so vivid that it often seems quite a recent memory. The more scientific theory is, I believe, that the Wadis are due to the last Ice Age.

[2] If you wonder at the extent of their activities, reflect that 'Ad lived 1,200 years, had a thousand wives, and sired four thousand sons and daughters. Masudi, V, III, p. 80.

[3] Any sign of human activity going beyond the knowledge of man is the work of the people of 'Ad. As Seiyid 'Abdul Qadir said to me, "the people of the interior attribute everything old to 'Ad and those of the coast to the Portuguese. Neither are right."

[4] This is not of course the orthodox view. Salih preached to Thamud and is not generally believed to be the father of Hud.

[5] The grave of the giant Mola Matar is not far from the Kor Seiban. It, and the other giants' tombs, may have been sanctuaries of the old religion. Possibly Mola Matar was a rain-god. Sodaf may be Sadaf, the descendant, according to Arab genealogists, of Hadhramaut.

tendency to fire high. Tactics are simple, usually an advance in strength or the investment or defence of small forts or houses. Any more complicated manœuvre involving strict timing or detailed concerted action would be beyond their capacity at present. They are difficult to control in action, and in the heat of the moment tend to forget their training and to expose themselves by not making use of ground and cover, but as their potential opponents suffer from the same faults this is not so serious as it would be against more experienced troops. The Bedouin does not favour night-fighting, but he is expert at moving and taking up position in the dark. He is willing to follow his officers, and has particular faith in those from the Arab Legion, who in simple fashion he believes must be more competent, as they have been brought in from another country. The same would apply to British officers, provided they understood his language and customs and accurately gauged his capabilities. Unless equipped with this knowledge, however, a British officer would find the Bedouin soldier awkward to handle and disappointing in action.

By showing promise and industry the soldier will gain promotion or can become a specialist such as wireless operator or armourer. At present the highest rank reached by any is lieutenant; owing to lack of experience, knowledge, and background, they are not yet suitable for higher rank, but in time this will be overcome. Part of the remedy may result from the foundation a few years ago of a Bedouin boys' school in Mukalla. This worth-while enterprise, sponsored and paid for by His Majesty's Government, is of considerable interest, and it is anticipated that ex-pupils will not only help to fill the ranks of H.B.L. with good material, but that others, encouraged to further education, will become much-needed Government servants, teachers and leaders in other walks of life.

There is a cadre of men who have voluntarily remained in the H.B.L. for longer periods, but after four years or so the average soldier, unless he has attained rank, will retire. He may ask that his place be taken by his brother or cousin, as he has liked the life, and his length of voluntary service speaks for itself. On his return to his tribe he will be an asset to Government, and his understanding and experience will be of help to political officers or other Government servants who may have dealings with his tribe or work to perform in his area. There is no reserve. The Bedouin in the Protectorate dislikes being tied down to a period of time, and a reserve as understood in a European army would be impossible to administer or co-ordinate. But in an emergency many ex-soldiers would return for temporary service if strongly requested.

Whatever the future may hold, there is no doubt that the Hadhrami Bedouin Legion performs useful tasks at low costs. It is in no sense planned as a national army, but in its military and political rôles has fully justified itself. One hopes that its ties with the Arab Legion will not be broken and that in the years to come it will attain the prestige and success in its own area which the Arab Legion enjoys in the Arab world as a whole.

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